

**Draft
Environmental Assessment**

**TRAVELERS' REST
MANAGEMENT DIRECTION
&
MASTER SITE PLAN DEVELOPMENT**

June 13, 2003



***Montana Fish,
Wildlife & Parks***

Region

**3201 Spurgin Rd., Missoula, MT 59802-3099
Phone 406-542-5500**

DRAFT

MEPA/NEPA/HB495 CHECKLIST

PART I. PROPOSED ACTION DESCRIPTION

1. Type of Proposed State Action

Management Direction & Development of state park facilities at the newly created Travelers' Rest State Park.

2. Agency Authority for the Proposed Action

23-2-101 MCA. FWP is vested with the purpose and authority to plan and develop outdoor recreational resources in the state and receive and expend funds including federal grants for this purpose.

3. Name of Project

Travelers' Rest Management Direction and Master Site Plan Development

4. Name, Address and Phone Number of Project Sponsor (if other than the agency)

Sponsored by Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) and Travelers' Rest Preservation and Heritage Association (TRPHA), PO Box 995, Lolo MT 59847

5. If Applicable:

Estimated Construction/Commencement Date: Summer 2003

Estimated Completion Date: Phase I completed October, 2003. Other phases completed as funding is available.

Current Status of Project Design (% complete): 15%

6. Location Affected by Proposed Action (county, range and township)

Travelers' Rest State Park is located at 6550 Mormon Creek Road, ¼ west of Highway 93 in Lolo., Missoula County, Township 12 North, Range 20 West, Section 34. The Park is currently accessed via Mormon Creek Road. When this project is complete, the park will be accessed via a road easement from U.S. Highway 12, ¼ mile west of the its junction with U.S. Highway 93. Current park size is 25 acres in ownership and 10 acres in conservation easement.

7. Project Size: Estimate the number of acres that would be directly affected that are currently:

(a) Developed:
residential.....__ acres
industrial__ acres

(b) Open Space/Woodlands/
Recreation 10 acres

(c) Wetlands/Riparian
Areas__ acres

(d) Floodplain 10 acres

- (e) Productive:
- | | | |
|-------------------------|----|-------|
| irrigated cropland..... | __ | acres |
| dry cropland..... | __ | acres |
| forestry..... | __ | acres |
| rangeland..... | 5 | acres |
| other..... | __ | acres |

8. **Map/site plan: attach an original 8 1/2" x 11" or larger section of the most recent USGS 7.5' series topographic map showing the location and boundaries of the area that would be affected by the proposed action. A different map scale may be substituted if more appropriate or if required by agency rule. If available, a site plan should also be attached.**

See Appendix A – Site Location Map, and Appendix B – Conceptual Master Site Plan

9. **Narrative Summary of the Proposed Action or Project including the Benefits and Purpose of the Proposed Action.**

Travelers' Rest State Park was established in March, 2001, when The Conservation Fund purchased a 15-acre tract believed to hold the heart of the historic Lewis and Clark campsite from the Pat and Ernie Deschamps family. The Conservation Fund then donated the tract to FWP, which then established the site as a Montana State Park. Unable to commit personnel and financial resources to the park, FWP entered into a management agreement with the Travelers' Rest Preservation and Heritage Association (TRPHA), passing development, interpretive, management, and financial responsibilities to TRPHA. In 2002, archaeologists discovered physical evidence of the Lewis and Clark Expedition on the site, one of the few places along the length of the Lewis and Clark Trail where such evidence has been found.

In June 2002, the FWP Commission approved the acquisition of an additional 20 acres. FWP acquired 10 acres in fee title and 10 acres in conservation easement from the Holts. These parcels are north of the existing state park. A permanent access easement from Highway 12 accompanied the fee title parcel. This brought the park up to 35 acres in size.

Discovered virtually at the eve of the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial, Travelers' Rest will certainly become a destination for the many thousands of visitors with an interest in this important event in U.S. history. The number of modern-day travelers also represent tremendous economic opportunities for Lolo and the surrounding area. Therefore, the park must be developed quickly in order to prepare for those visitors, and create an experience that encourages those visitors to return, while also remaining sensitive to cultural and environmental resources.

Planning has been ongoing for many years, and a Draft Management Direction has been created to guide FWP and TRPHA through the coming years of the bicentennial commemoration (See Appendix C – Draft Travelers' Rest State Park Management Direction). The partners have also created a Conceptual Site Master Plan to help in the site development and interpretation (See Appendix B – Conceptual Master Plan).

Funding will determine how quickly the developments are completed, thus a phased approach is proposed. Phase I construction will include some basic upgrades and improvements in and around the administrative buildings located off of Mormon Creek Road. It would include items such as: parking lot improvements & expansion, garage remodel, latrine installation, interpretive kiosk structure installation, removal of fencing & corrals & shed, and disabled accessibility improvements to the office building. Phase II will include the construction of the infrastructure needed on the North side of Lolo Creek where the visitor services area will be located. This includes an entrance road, parking lot, trails, a bridge across Lolo Creek, restroom facilities & septic system, a well, utilities, interpretive kiosk structures, picnic areas, landscaping, etc. This environmental assessment will address all development proposed in the Master Site Plan and Management Direction.

10. Listing of any other Local, State or Federal agency that has overlapping or additional jurisdiction.

(a) Permits:

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Permit</u>	<u>Date Filed/#</u>
Missoula County Sanitarian	Septic Permit	filing will be complete prior to construction
Montana State Building Codes	Building Permit	same
Montana Dept. of Transportation	Approach permit	same
Missoula County Floodplain		

(b) Funding:

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Funding Amount</u>
Because of the unique management agreement between TRPHA and FWP, funding will come from a variety of public and private sources.	

(c) Other Overlapping or Additional Jurisdictional Responsibilities:

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Type of Responsibility</u>
State Historic Preservation Office	historic preservation clearance

11. List of Agencies Consulted During Preparation of the EA:

Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks:
Design and Construction, Helena
Parks Division, Helena
Region 2 Parks, Missoula
Region 2 Fisheries, Missoula
Region 2 Wildlife, Missoula
Department of Commerce, Tourism
State Historic Preservation Office

PART II. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

1. <u>LAND RESOURCES</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
< a. Soil instability or changes in geologic substructure?		X				
b. Disruption, displacement, erosion, compaction, moisture loss, or over-covering of soil which would reduce productivity or fertility?			X			1b.
< c. Destruction, covering or modification of any unique geologic or physical features?		X				
d. Changes in siltation, deposition or erosion patterns that may modify the channel of a river or stream or the bed or shore of a lake?			X			1d.
e. Exposure of people or property to earthquakes, landslides, ground failure, or other natural hazard?		X				
f. Other						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

1b. Development of infrastructure and visitor services will require disruption, displacement, compaction, and over-covering of soils to enable for preparation and paving of entrance roads and parking areas, curbing, comfort stations, and utilities. Some visitor amenities such as pedestrian paths, interpretive kiosks, access roads, and parking areas will eliminate the productivity and fertility of some areas. Most of these activities will be limited to the land north of Lolo Creek, in order to protect integrity of cultural resources on the historic campsite south of Lolo Creek. Native vegetation will be used to provide visual and sound screening from the park, as well as shade for visitors. The planting of this vegetation, in appropriate areas, will increase vegetative cover in the area. Most of the site has been used for agricultural purposes in the past and has been tilled at some time. Conversations with FWP archaeology staff and staff from the Salish-Kootenai Tribal Preservation Office indicate that there are no cultural resources evident on the property north of Lolo Creek where the proposed access, parking, and visitor orientation would take place. The property south of Lolo Creek has been proposed as open space in the 2002 Lolo Comprehensive Plan, while the land north of Lolo Creek is divided between open and resource land (the land located in the floodplain) and residential at the rate of 1 dwelling per 5 acres (the land outside the floodplain).

1d. The proposed pedestrian bridge across Lolo Creek may have some impact on stream dynamics. However, the bridge is being designed in a manner to have a minimal impact to natural streamflows.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

2. <u>AIR</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
< a. Emission of air pollutants or deterioration of ambient air quality? (also see 13 (c))		X				
b. Creation of objectionable odors?		X				
c. Alteration of air movement, moisture, or temperature patterns or any change in climate, either locally or regionally?		X				
d. Adverse effects on vegetation, including crops, due to increased emissions of pollutants?		X				
e. <input type="checkbox"/> For P-R/D-J projects, will the project result in any discharge which will conflict with federal or state air quality regs? (Also see 2a)		X				
f. Other						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Air Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

- 3 Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated. 5
- < Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM)
- α Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.
- αα Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

3. <u>WATER</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
< a. Discharge into surface water or any alteration of surface water quality including but not limited to temperature, dissolved oxygen or turbidity?		X				
b. Changes in drainage patterns or the rate and amount of surface runoff?			X			3b.
c. Alteration of the course or magnitude of flood water or other flows?			X			3c.
d. Changes in the amount of surface water in any water body or creation of a new water body?		X				
e. Exposure of people or property to water related hazards such as flooding?		X				
f. Changes in the quality of groundwater?		X				
g. Changes in the quantity of groundwater?			X			3g.
h. Increase in risk of contamination of surface or groundwater?		X				
i. Effects on any existing water right or reservation?		X				
j. Effects on other water users as a result of any alteration in surface or groundwater quality?		X				
k. Effects on other users as a result of any alteration in surface or groundwater quantity?		X				
l. <input type="checkbox"/> For P-R/D-J, will the project affect a designated floodplain? (Also see 3c)		X				
m. <input type="checkbox"/> For P-R/D-J, will the project result in any discharge that will affect federal or state water quality regulations? (Also see 3a)		X				
n. Other:						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Water Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

3b. Due to the new hard surfaces created by asphalt roads and parking areas, the drainage patterns and the rate and amount of surface runoff will slightly increase. These new facilities will be graded according to standard engineering procedures and drainage retention basins may be used to collect runoff, which will limit the rate of runoff or impacts to surface water quality.

3c. The development of visitor services on the north side of Lolo Creek may have a minor impact on flood waters.

3g. The installation of a comfort station will use additional water. According to the Ground Water Information Center, the average well depth in T12N, R20W, section 34 was 70 feet with an average yield of 51 gallons per minute.

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PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

4. <u>VEGETATION</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
a. Changes in the diversity, productivity or abundance of plant species (including trees, shrubs, grass, crops, and aquatic plants)?			X (positive)			4a
b. Alteration of a plant community?		X				
c. Adverse effects on any unique, rare, threatened, or endangered species?		X				
d. Reduction in acreage or productivity of any agricultural land?			X			4d.
e. Establishment or spread of noxious weeds?		X				
f. <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> For P-R/D-J, will the project affect wetlands, or prime and unique farmland?		X				
g. Other:						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

4a. Revegetation of native plant species is expected, especially adjacent to entryways and parking areas, as well as in the traditional agricultural fields south of the administrative area. This will add to the biological diversity of the area.

4d. Approximately 5 acres of the proposed development on the north side of Lolo Creek has been used intermittently for grazing by the former land owner.

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- 7
- < Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM)
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PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

< 5. <u>FISH/WILDLIFE</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
a. Deterioration of critical fish or wildlife habitat?		X				
b. Changes in the diversity or abundance of game animals or bird species?		X				
c. Changes in the diversity or abundance of nongame species?			X (positive)			5c.
d. Introduction of new species into an area?		X				
e. Creation of a barrier to the migration or movement of animals?		X				
f. Adverse effects on any unique, rare, threatened, or endangered species?		X				
g. Increase in conditions that stress wildlife populations or limit abundance (including harassment, legal or illegal harvest or other human activity)?			X			5g
h. <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> For P-R/D-J, will the project be performed in any area in which T&E species are present, and will the project affect any T&E species or their habitat? (Also see 5f)		X				
i. <input type="checkbox"/> For P-R/D-J, will the project introduce or export any species not presently or historically occurring in the receiving location? (Also see 5d)		X				
j. Other:						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

5c. Planting of native vegetation for ambience, education, and screening on the site could increase the diversity of non-game species, especially birds, to certain areas of the park.

5g. Increased human activity may slightly stress wildlife during the summer visitor season. This can be mitigated when the managing entities work with the local biologist to develop a plan for the site, strategically place trails within the park to limit impacts on wildlife, or limit activity in specific areas during certain times of the year.

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HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

6. <u>NOISE/ELECTRICAL EFFECTS</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
a. Increases in existing noise levels?			X			6a.
b. Exposure of people to serve or nuisance noise levels?		X				
c. Creation of electrostatic or electromagnetic effects that could be detrimental to human health or property?		X				
d. Interference with radio or television reception and operation?		X				
e. Other:		X				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

6a. Increased noise levels due to traffic and visitor activity can be anticipated. However, most activities at the site will not be of a boisterous nature. The park will be open for day use only, with hours not to exceed dawn to dusk. Part of the design of the park is to incorporate native shrubs and trees wherever appropriate into the landscape design to assist in noise reduction.

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

7. <u>LAND USE</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
a. Alteration of or interference with the productivity or profitability of the existing land use of an area?		X				
b. Conflicted with a designated natural area or area of unusual scientific or educational importance?		X				
c. Conflict with any existing land use whose presence would constrain or potentially prohibit the proposed action?		X				
d. Adverse effects on or relocation of residences?		X				
e. Other: _____						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

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HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

8. <u>RISK/HEALTH HAZARDS</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
a. Risk of an explosion or release of hazardous substances (including, but not limited to oil, pesticides, chemicals, or radiation) in the event of an accident or other forms of disruption?		X				
b. Affect an existing emergency response or emergency evacuation plan or create a need for a new plan?		X				
c. Creation of any human health hazard or potential hazard?		X				
d. <input type="checkbox"/> For P-R/D-J, will any chemical toxicants be used? (Also see 8a)		X				
e. Other:						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

9. <u>COMMUNITY IMPACT</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
a. Alteration of the location, distribution, density, or growth rate of the human population of an area?		X				
b. Alteration of the social structure of a community?			X (positive)			9b.
c. Alteration of the level or distribution of employment or community or personal income?	X					9c.
d. Changes in industrial or commercial activity?	X					9d.
e. Increased traffic hazards or effects on existing transportation facilities or patterns of movement of people and goods?			X			9e.
f. Other:						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

9b. Travelers' Rest State Park is being designed to appeal to the local resident as well as the cultural traveler. The park offers social and recreational opportunities for local residents and therefore may assist in the development of future community identity.

9c. and 9d. Travelers' Rest State Park will become a destination for those interested in the Lewis and Clark Expedition and its associated history. Entrepreneurs may choose to establish businesses or expand existing commercial ventures in order to capitalize on the interest in this site. If so, this could create jobs and economic opportunity for local residents, many of whom currently commute for their employment.

9e. It could have reasonably been expected that traffic in the area would increase during the years of the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial commemoration in 2005 and 2006, even before the establishment of Travelers' Rest State Park. The identification, preservation, and interpretation of the site will no doubt add increased traffic to U.S. Highway 12 and U.S. Highway 93. All state highway visibility standards and approach standards will be followed. The original access easement for the north side entrance has already been re-negotiated based on Montana DOT approach concerns.

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HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

10. <u>PUBLIC SERVICES/TAXES/UTILITIES</u> Will the proposed action:	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
a. Have an effect upon or result in a need for new or altered governmental services in any of the following areas: fire or police protection, schools, parks/recreational facilities, roads or other public maintenance, water supply, sewer or septic systems, solid waste disposal, health, or other governmental services? If any, specify: <u>police protection, septic systems, solid waste disposal</u>			X			10a.
b. Have an effect upon the local or state tax base and revenues?			X			10b.
c. Result in a need for new facilities or substantial alterations of any of the following utilities: electric power, natural gas, other fuel supply or distribution systems, or communications?		X				
d. Result in increased use of any energy source?			X			10d.
< e. Define projected revenue sources			X			10e.
< f. Define projected maintenance costs.			X			10f.
g. Other: _____						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

10a. Primary law enforcement activities are conducted by FWP. Travelers' Rest State Park and FWP enforcement personnel will make regular patrols through the park and periodically meet with representatives from the county and state police to encourage similar patrolling activities. Minor supplemental or jurisdictional assistance may be requested from the Missoula County Sheriff's Department and the Montana Highway Patrol.

A drain field for a septic system has been identified on the property north of Lolo Creek through a feasibility study conducted by PCI Engineering on behalf of TRPHA. This study has identified several alternatives for septic systems and solid waste disposal.

10b. State parks and non-profit organizations are exempt from state, county, and local taxes. Park improvements, however, may slightly increase local property values. Also, increased tourism traffic will increase local and area tourism related incomes, with a corresponding increase in tax revenue.

10d. The proposed infrastructure will require electricity to light and operate some of the development, such as comfort stations, water pump, etc. This will result in a slight increase in electrical usage.

10e. The management agreement between TRPHA and FWP transfers all financial responsibility to TRPHA. A variety of public and private sources will be used to fund the proposed development. The Montana Lewis and Clark Legacy Campaign was begun in 2002. This fundraising partnership between TRPHA, the Pompey's Pillar Historical Association, the Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center Foundation, the Montana Lewis & Clark Bicentennial Commission, and the Montana Historical Society is working to raise funds for capital projects for the partners. Many of the projects proposed in the Management Direction will be funded through this campaign. Montana State Parks will participate financially when feasible.

10f. The management agreement between TRPHA and FWP transfer all financial responsibility to TRPHA. TRPHA has been successful in acquiring grants that cover the management and maintenance costs. Montana State Parks helps with some maintenance items when feasible.

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HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

<input type="checkbox"/> 11. <u>AESTHETICS/RECREATION</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
a. Alteration of any scenic vista or creation of an aesthetically offensive site or effect that is open to public view?			X (positive)			11a.
b. Alteration of the aesthetic character of a community or neighborhood?			X (positive)			11b.
< c. Alteration of the quality or quantity of recreational/tourism opportunities and settings? (Attach Tourism Report)			X (positive)			See Appendix D - Tourism Report
d. <input type="checkbox"/> For P-R/D-J, will any designated or proposed wild or scenic rivers, trails or wilderness areas be impacted? (Also see 11a, 11c)		X				
e. Other:						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

11a. Travelers' Rest State Park is located in a fast-growing residential area. Establishment of the park has preserved areas of open space for residents, in addition to preserving a national historic site.

11b. By preserving open space, Travelers' Rest State Park has provided a recreational anchor for local residents. The focus will be on historical interpretation and education, but residents may access the park for walking, wildlife viewing, fishing, picnicking, and other recreational pursuits.

11c. Visitation to Travelers' Rest State Park is expected to substantially increase with the Lewis & Clark Bicentennial Celebration. The Lolo Community especially, is hopeful that this state park & this event will help to stimulate the economy of the area. The master site plan shows the development that is planned and needed in order to meet the demands that increased visitation to the site will bring. The infrastructure is necessary in order to provide safety to the public while visiting this most important historic place. During the celebration years, visitors to the site may experience large numbers of other visitors that may diminish ones experience but with this celebration being a National Event, it is probably expected.

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

12. <u>CULTURAL/HISTORICAL RESOURCES</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
< a. Destruction or alteration of any site, structure or object of prehistoric historic, or paleontological importance?			X			12d
b. Physical change that would affect unique cultural values?			X			12d
c. Effects on existing religious or sacred uses of a site or area?		X				
d. <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> For P-R/D-J, will the project affect historic or cultural resources?			X			12d. See Appendix E – SHPO letter.
e. Other:						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

12d. Due to the historic and prehistoric significance of this site, care is being taken to preserve the archaeological record. FWP and TRPHA are awaiting an independent report of the historic record based on the archaeological work done on site in 2002. Development on the historic site is largely limited to a loop trail. Once the report has been received, FWP and TRPHA will consult with SHPO and tribal entities with historical ties to the area to determine the best methodology of protecting the cultural resources. Based on a "Cultural Resource Inventory Report" of 7/16/02 by Dori Passmann, there is no indication of historic artifacts or records on the property north of Lolo Creek, where the significant portion of development (see master site plan) will take place.

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HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

13. SUMMARY EVALUATION OF SIGNIFICANCE Will the proposed action, considered as a whole:	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
a. Have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? (A project or program may result in impacts on two or more separate resources which create a significant effect when considered together or in total.)		X				
b. Involve potential risks or adverse effects which are uncertain but extremely hazardous if they were to occur?		X				
c. Potentially conflict with the substantive requirements of any local, state, or federal law, regulation, standard or formal plan?		X				
d. Establish a precedent or likelihood that future actions with significant environmental impacts will be proposed?		X				
e. Generate substantial debate or controversy about the nature of the impacts that would be created?		X				
f. <input type="checkbox"/> For P-R/D-J, is the project expected to have organized opposition or generate substantial public controversy? (Also see 13e)		X				
g. <input type="checkbox"/> For P-R/D-J, list any federal or state permits required.		X				13g.

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

13g. See item 10a on page 3.

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- 2 Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.
- 22 Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

2. Description and analysis of reasonable alternatives (including the no action alternative) to the proposed action whenever alternatives are reasonably available and prudent to consider and a discussion of how the alternatives would be implemented:

Alternative 1. No Action

The “no action” alternative does not address three important issues. First, taking no action would funnel thousands of visitors from Highway 93 to the existing park entrance on Mormon Creek Road. In addition to increased traffic and noise to this largely residential area, this alternative would not address visitor needs such as restrooms, orientation, or adequate parking. Second, this alternative would not allow for adequate interpretation of this national historic site. Finally, this alternative would decrease the possibility of establishing an experience for visitors and residents that can be sustained after the end of the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial, which would threaten the success of the unique public/private partnership and approach to managing and funding Travelers’ Rest State Park.

Alternative 2. Establish interpretation and infrastructure on the south side of Lolo Creek.

This alternative addresses some of the needs, but continues to funnel visitors through the residential area along Mormon Creek Road. This alternative could have significant impacts to cultural resources on the historic site with the development of parking areas, interpretive pavilions and others structures impacting open space and educational areas.

Alternative 3. Preferred Alternative. Develop site according to Conceptual Master Site Plan and Management Direction as funding is available.

Travelers’ Rest is a site of national historic significance. The identification and preservation of the site just a few years before the commemoration of the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial has already stirred tremendous local, state, and national attention. The park will be a major destination for cultural tourists and area residents interested in the history of western Montana. In order to prepare for these visitors, as well as develop a site that inspires visitors to return after the bicentennial, the partner organizations must move quickly to develop adequate infrastructure and engaging programs. This alternative creates that infrastructure without building so much that can’t be sustained, respects the existing neighborhoods, and provides an informative and comfortable experience for park visitors. This alternative also preserves the integrity of the historic site and establishes a secondary trail system to disperse visitors during peak times. This alternative will alleviate some traffic congestion by re-locating the park entrance to U.S. Highway 12, away from the commuter traffic found on U.S. Highway 93. This alternative also allows for an “organic” approach to trails through the riparian zone, allowing the flood and ebb cycle of Lolo Creek to continue. The attention focused on the site by the archaeological discoveries and the impending bicentennial commemoration provides a unique opportunity to solicit funding for these projects. It is unlikely many of those funding opportunities will exist after 2006.

3. Evaluation and listing of mitigation, stipulation, or other control measures enforceable by the agency or another government agency:

Contractors hired by FWP and TRPHA are required to follow all standard operating procedures, state guidelines, and acquire all necessary state and federal permits.

Disturbance of surrounding vegetation during construction will be limited to the immediate vicinity to lessen the impacts from dust, surface runoff, elimination of non-native plant species, and weed encroachment. Water trucks will be used during construction of the roads and parking areas to minimize dust. Planting native vegetation in disturbed areas will minimize the impacts of erosion and weed infestation.

Noxious weeds are a primary concern of FWP and TRPHA, and an integrated weed management program will be part of the implementation of the Management Direction. The planting of native vegetation in the disturbed areas and targeting those areas during weed control measures will reduce the possibility of spreading noxious weeds.

The planting of various shrubs and trees on appropriate locations on the site will be instrumental in the return and/or increase in the number of songbirds.

Most of the construction will take place on the north side of Lolo Creek, away from the current park and in a field

that is a minimum of 100 yards from existing residences. This will lessen the impacts of construction noise and activities on park visitors and area residents.

4. Based on the significance criteria evaluated in this EA, is an EIS required? NO If an EIS is not required, explain why the EA is the appropriate level of analysis for this proposed action:

This environmental review revealed no significant negative impacts due to the proposed action, therefore an EIS is not necessary and an Environmental Assessment is the appropriate level of analysis.

5. Describe the level of public involvement for this project if any and, given the complexity and the seriousness of the environmental issues associated with the proposed action, is the level of public involvement appropriate under the circumstances?

The level of public participation is outlined in the Management Direction in the section titled "Public Involvement." The public will be notified in the following manners to comment on the EA, the Management Direction, the proposed action, and the alternatives:

- one statewide press release
- public notices in the *Missoulian*, and *Independent Record*, newspapers.
- notification on the FWP website <http://fwp.state.mt.us/notices/default.asp>
- notification on the TRPHA website www.travelersrest.org

Due to the level of public participation thus far in the project, a public meeting is not scheduled for public comment on the EA, Management Direction, proposed action, and alternatives. However, this opportunity will be provided if requested. Notification of the available EA will be mailed to neighboring landowners and other interested parties to ensure their knowledge of the proposed action and provide a venue to request the document. Comments are welcome, and can be mailed to the address below.

The opportunities for public input listed above are appropriate for the proposed actions since few negative environmental impacts are identified and the Conceptual Master Plan has been available for review since August of 2002.

6. Duration of comment period if any:

Thirty (30) days following the publication of the legal notices will be provided for public comment. Written comments will be accepted until 5:00 P.M., July 18, 2003, and can be mailed to the address below:

Travelers' Rest State Park EA
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
3201 Spurgin Road
Missoula MT 59804-3099

7. Name, title, address and phone number of the Person(s) Responsible for Preparing the EA:

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PART III. NARRATIVE EVALUATION AND COMMENT

TRPHA, FWP and all the partners associated with Travelers' Rest State Park stand at the threshold of a unique opportunity. Having identified the historic campsite at the dawn of the bicentennial commemoration will focus a great deal of attention and visitation to the Lolo area. Finding physical evidence of the Lewis and Clark expedition provides immediate credibility as a significant site for visitors along the Lewis and Clark Trail.

With this credibility and enthusiasm, it is imperative that the organizations use this energy and attention to create a sustainable and dynamic operation that is a benefit to area residents and visitors while remaining financially stable.

This unique public/private collaboration should also continue to develop partnerships that will assist with site development, program creation, education curriculum development, and event planning. All parties involved should keep in mind that this relationship can be used as a model for similar situations in the future.

While no accurate estimates are available for visitation to the site during the bicentennial commemoration, six figure visitor numbers for the years of 2005-2006 are possible. TRPHA and FWP have defined a path to create a safe, educational, and engaging experience for these visitors, and those who will come after the bicentennial.

The negative impacts from the proposed action are temporary and/or minor, of which many can be mitigated. All disturbed areas will be graded and seeded. Great care will be taken to preserve and protect historic and cultural resources. The developments planned for this site will enhance the visitor's experience and opportunities.

APPENDICES:

- A. Site Location Map
- B. Conceptual Master Plan
- C. *Draft* Travelers' Rest State Park Management Direction
- D. Tourism Report
- E. State Historic Preservation Office letter